

Third International Coaching Conference

“Coaching Philosophy”

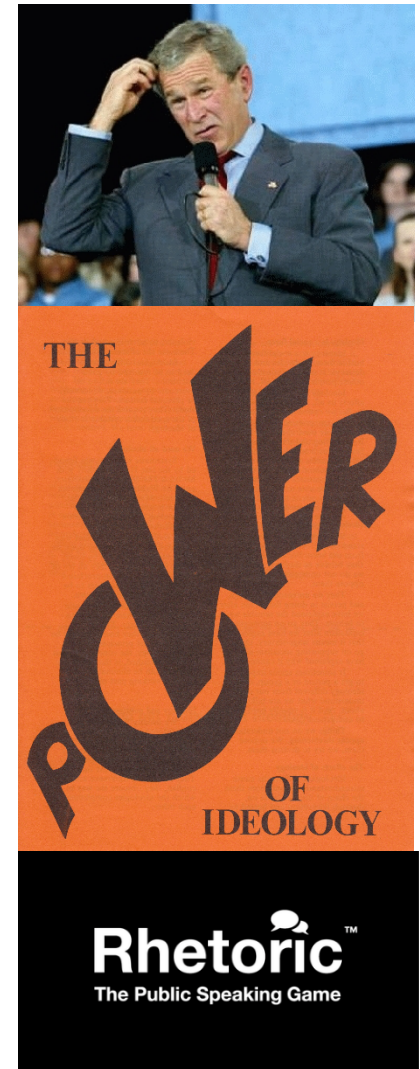
Mark Partington & Dr. Christopher Cushion



Introduction

- A coach's 'philosophy' above all else informs their coaching (Cassidy, Jones & Potrac, 2009; Lyle, 2002)
- Lack of conceptual clarity
 - limited explanation of definitions, terms & frameworks
- Current literature conflates coaching rhetoric & ideology
- Empirical work provides conceptual incoherence and confusion

(Cushion & Partington, 2014)



Methodology

Participants and setting

- 9 youth football coaches (U9's – U16's) in an academy context.

Data collection and procedure

- July 2013 – September 2014.
- *Ethnography*
 - *Interviews*: 18 semi-structured (2 pre/post).
 - *Observations*: 57 practice sessions (3+ per coach (Brewer & Jones, 2002)).

Data Analysis

- Thematic analysis
 - Abductive process (Nelson & Cushion, 2006).



Finding: *Different understanding*

Interviewer: “What is a coaching philosophy?”
“I see it as a **style of play**, how you believe the game should be played” (Interview, Jonathan, 2013).

“... can we make sure we continue the **1v1s** at the start of the sessions, it needs to match our **coaching philosophy**” (Field notes, Jake, 2014).

“So you've got a very clear understanding of what you want a **model of a player** to be” (Interview, Tim, 2014).



Finding: *Different understanding*

“So the philosophy is basically in line with our previous manager’s way of playing” (Interview, Baz, 2013).

“It is the same philosophy at 7-a-side to 11-a-side, the teams play in the same way ” (Field notes, Tony, 2014).

“I’m not sure really what my coaching philosophy is, the clubs is playing out from the back...” (Interview, Kev, 2014).

“Not sure it depends who you talk to...” (Interview, Simon, 2013)



Finding: *Rationalisation NOT a rationale*

“Player centered” (Interview, Joe, 2013) vs “group coaching, no 1 to 1” (Field notes, 2013)

“Yeah I probably do coach more to the group... because of time” (Field notes, Joe, 2013)

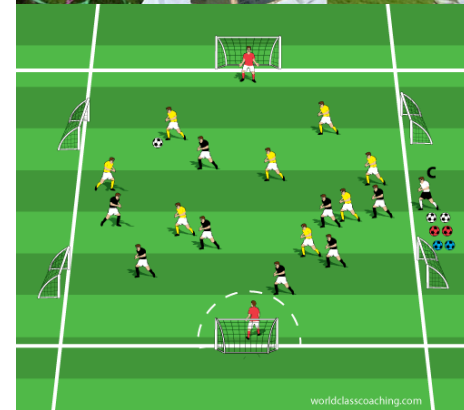
“Development over winning” (Interview, Jay, 2013) vs “It was nice to beat them at their new academy” (Field notes, Jay, 2013)

“Creating decision making players is now important”
Interviewer “how do you do this?”

“Its difficult really... just lots of games”

Interviewer: “Why games?”

Coach: “Erm not sure really” (Interview, Simon, 2013)



Finding: *Rationalisation NOT a rationale*

“You hear people saying coaching philosophy all the time especially the top managers on the TV” (Interview, Simon, 2013)

“For the audit purposes we have to use certain terms that the Head of Youth Performance uses” (Interview, Jonathan, 2014)

“Jonathan [Assistant coach] sounds like a clone of Jay [Head of Youth Development]” (Field notes, 2014)

After a lot of discussion about “player centered”...

Coach: “Well that’s what they said on my B and Tony [Coach educator] keeps going on about it”

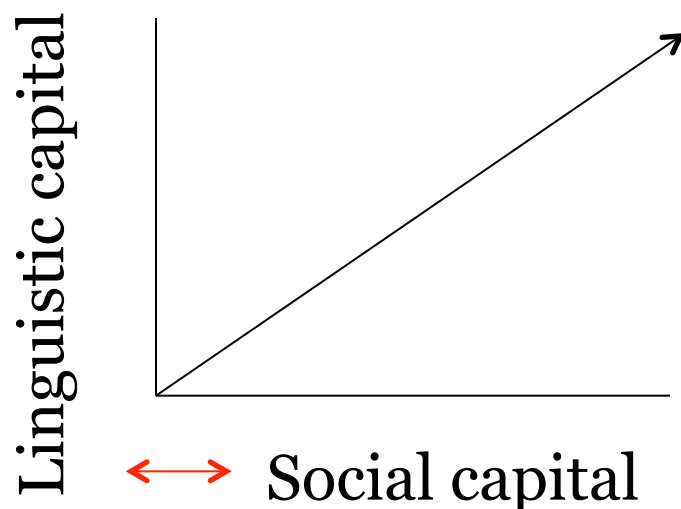
Interviewer: “What does it mean?”

Coach: “If I’m honest, I’m not to sure really” (Field notes, Dean, 2013)



Discussion points

- Unconscious activity?!?
 - "...the notion of 'unconscious' means that Bourdieu's (1977) social actor [coach] is far from rational (Everett, 2002)"
- Symbolic capital...



Discussion points

- Ideological rhetoric perpetuates a powerful doxic system.
 - Habitus: “a socialized subjectivity” and “the social embodied”
(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)
 - Reproduction.
 - Cultural and historical rhetoric from the academy, governing body, the sport and coaches informing coaches rationalisation of practice.



Reference list

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Any questions or suggestions?

